

## Message Text

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ACTION IO-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 EUR-12 ISO-00 EB-07 AID-05 CIAE-00

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R 181340Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY FREETOWN

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PARIS FOR UNESCO ROME FOR FODAG VIENNA FOR IAEA AND UNIDO  
MONTREAL FOR ICAO

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAID, ECRP, UNDP

SUBJECT: CERP 0008--EVALUATION OF UN ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

REF: FREETOWN 562 OF MARCH 28, 1974, STATE 064907

1. SUMMARY: THE UNDP PROGRAM IN SIERRA LEONE HAS GONE THROUGH  
A YEAR OF QUIET CONSOLIDATION. IN THE ABSENCE OF A PERMANENT  
RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE FOR MUCH OF THE YEAR, ONLY A LITTLE  
PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW PROJECTS  
FOCUSING ON AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT. COORDINATION  
CONTINUES TO BE LACKING BUT THE CONSOLIDATION OF UNDP PROGRAMS IS  
GIVING RISE TO INCREASED OPPORTUNITIES FOR COORDINATION AND  
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MUTUAL RE-INFORCEMENT BETWEEN PROJECTS. END SUMMARY

(A) ROLE OF UNDP IN UN DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

2. A NEW UNDP PERMANENT RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE ARRIVED IN FREETOWN IN MARCH, 1975, ENDING A HIATUS WHICH BEGAN NEARLY NINE MONTHS EARLIER WITH THE DEPARTURE OF FORMER RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE. DURING THE INTERIM TWO DIFFERENT PERSONS WERE AT VARIOUS TIMES IN CHARGE OF THE UNDP PROGRAM. DESPITE THE HARDWORKING EFFORTS OF THE UNDP STAFF, THE LONG ABSENCE OF A PERMANENT RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE LEFT THE UNDP PROGRAM SOMEWHAT ADRIFT WITHOUT A FIRM POLICY GUIDANCE. NEVERTHELESS THE UNDP STAFF AND THE INTERIM RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE HAVE WORKED HARD TO CONSOLIDATE THE UNDP PROGRAMS AND TO EXERCISE CLOSER COORDINATION, PARTICULARLY AT THE WORKING LEVEL.

3. AFTER A SLOW START, UNDP'S ROKUPR RICE RESEARCH STATION PROJECT HAS BEGUN TO WORK MORE CLOSELY WITH THE IDA INTEGRATED AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT IN THE EASTERN PROVINCE. ROKUPR IS PROVIDING SEED VARIETIES WHICH ARE BEING USED BY FARMERS IN THE IDA PROJECT AND IDA IS CONDUCTING FOR ROKUPR SOME TRIALS ON ITS TEST PLOTS. THE POTENTIAL FOR INCREASED LINKAGES WILL EXPAND AS THE RESEARCH PROGRAM AT ROKUPR GETS OFF THEGROUND. COOPERATION IS ALSO DEVELOPING BETWEEN THE ROKUPR PROJECT AND THE UNDP SOIL AND LAND USE SURVEY TEAM WHICH IS NOW ASSEMBLING IN FREETOWN. IT IS HOPED THAT THE NEEDS OF BOTH PROJECTS FOR A SOILS LABORATORY CAN BE MET BY A SINGLE FACILITY INCORPORATING THE DESIGN AND EQUIPMENT NEEDS OF BOTH PROJECTS. THESE LAUDABLE SIGNS OF COOPERATION HAVE BEEN MADE POSSIBLE BY THE FACT THAT UNDP'S NEW PROGRAMS ARE NOW MORE CLEARLY FOCUSED AROUND THE PRIORITIES OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL EDUCATION. UNDP FREETOWN HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN MARSHALLING SUPPORT FOR VARIOUS UN AGENCIES INCLUDING UNESCO AND THE UN CAPITAL FUND, BEHIND ITS PROPOSED BUNUMBU PRIMARY EDUCATION TEACHER TRAINING PROJECT EMPHASIZING AGRICULTURAL, VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP.

4. DESPITE THESE INITIAL EFFORTS, THE DEAD WEIGHT OF THE PAST REMAINS A HEAVY INFLUENCE IN THE UNDP COUNTRY PROGRAM. FUNDS CONTINUE TO BE EXPENDED ON OVER 30 PROJECTS, MANY OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WHICH OFFER LITTLE MORE THAN THE SERVICES OF ONE OR TWO EXPERTS WORKING IN ISOLATED NOOKS AND CRANNIES OF THE SIERRA LEONE GOVERNMENT. IT IS THIS IMAGE OF UNDP THAT PERSISTS IN THE MINDS OF MANY SIERRA LEONEANS IN AND OUT OF GOVERNMENT. WHEN THE NEW RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE ARRIVED IN FREETOWN HIS WELCOME IN THE PRESS WAS LACED WITH UNFAVORABLE COMMENTS ON UNDP EXPERTS WHO CONTRIBUTED LITTLE TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE COUNTRY BUT WHOSE SALARIES ARE CALLED

UNDP ASSISTANCE.

5. PAST EMBASSY REPORTS HAVE EMPHASIZED IN PARTICULAR THE LACK OF GOSL POLITICAL DIRECTION AND BUREAUCRATIC COORDINATION IN THE DRAWING UP OF THE UNDP PLANNING UNIT'S FIVE YEAR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN. AS A RESULT OF THIS LACK OF COORDINATION, THE PLAN IS VERY WEAK IN MANY SECTORS. FURTHERMORE, GOVERNMENT, HAVING NOT PARTICIPATED DEEPLY IN THE PLAN'S FORMULATION, FEELS ONLY A LIMITED SENSE OF COMMITMENT TO THE DEVELOPMENT PATH CHARTED IN THE PLAN.

(B) COORDINATION OF ALL EXTERNAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

6. THE GOSL, AT THE POLITICAL LEVEL, HAS SHOWN INDIFFERENCE TO THE NEED TO COORDINATE EXTERNAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE. SIERRA LEONE'S MOST CONSPICUOUS BILATERAL DONOR, CHINA, HAS UNTIL VERY RECENTLY AVOIDED COORDINATION WITH OTHER DONORS. THE CHINESE HAVE IMPORTED THEIR OWN RICE VARIETIES AND HAVE CONDUCTED TRIALS IN THEIR OWN PLOTS INDEPENDENTLY FROM SIMILAR WORK BEING CONDUCTED AT ROKUPR RICE RESEARCH STATION. IN THE EASTERN PROVINCE CHINESE AND IDA AGRICULTURE PROGRAMS WORK SIMULTANEOUSLY AND INDEPENDENTLY ON RICE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS, EVEN THOUGH BOTH ARE IN PRINCIPLE UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE. THE FAILURE TO COORDINATE HAS RESULTED NOT ONLY IN MISSED OPPORTUNITIES BUT ALSO IN COUNTERPRODUCTIVE EFFORTS. IN ONE CASE CHINESE AGRICULTURISTS DIVERTED A STREAM TO IRRIGATE A RICE FIELD AND DRIED UP A RICE SWAMP DOWNSTREAM WHICH WAS BEING DEVELOPED BY IDA.

7. SOME SMALL VICTORIES HAVE, HOWEVER, BEEN WON. FOR THE FIRST TIME THE CHINESE HAVE ATTENDED MEETINGS DESIGNED TO COORDINATE A NATIONWIDE PROGRAM FOR TESTING RICE VARIETIES. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CHINESE ASSISTANCE WAS INCLUDED IN THE ASSESSMENT OF AVAILABLE RESOURCES IN THE UNDP FIVE YEAR PLAN AND UNDP'S ANNUAL

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FM AMEMBASSY FREETOWN

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INVENTORY OF DONOR PROGRAMS IN SIERRA LEONE INCLUDED

FOR THE FIRST TIME CHINESE ASSISTANCE PROJECTS. THE EMBASSY

HAS NOTED WITH APPROVAL THE INTENTION OF THE NEW UNDP

PERMANENT RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE TO GIVE HIGH PRIORITY TO

THE TIGHTENING OF THE COORDINATION OF EXTERNAL TECHNICAL

ASSISTANCE.

(C) ROLE OF RESREP VIS-A-VIS OTHER UN SYSTEM ACTIVITIES

8. DISASTER RELIEF, REFUGEES AND OTHER AD HOC ACTIVITIES

HAVE NOT BEEN DEVELOPMENT ISSUES IN SIERRA LEONE. THE EMBASSY

DOES NOT, HOWEVER, RECIEVE ANY POLICY OR ORGANIZATION

BARRIERS THAT WOULD PREVENT A DETERMINED RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE

FROM COORDINATING SUCH PROGRAMS SHOULD THE NEED ARISE.

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(D) COUNTRY PROGRAM REVIEWS

9. BECAUSE LESS THAN A MONTH HAS PSSSED SINCE THE ARRIVAL OF

THE NEW UNDP RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE, A COUNTRY PROGRAM REVIEW

HAS NOT YET BEEN CONDUCTED. PAST COUNTRY PROGRAM REVIEWS HAVE

HOWEVER, FULLY HIGHLIGHTED THE DISJOINTED NATURE OF UNDP

PROGRAMS AND HAVE HELPED STIMULATE THE CURRENT FOCUS ON NEW PROJECTS EMPHASIZING AGRICULTURE AND RURAL WELFARE.

(E) APPRAISAL OF PROPOSED PROJECTS

10. DURING THE PAST YEAR THE EMBASSY HAS OFFERED SPECIFIC COMMENTS ON THE LARGER NEW UNDP PROJECTS. WITH RESPECT TO THE SOILS AND LAND USE SURVEY, WE HAVE NOTIFIED THE GOSL AND UNDP OF TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE THROUGH ERTS AND HAVE INFORMED THE PROJECT MANAGER AND HIS SIERRA LEONEAN COUNTERPART OF THE ADVANTAGES TO BE GAINED BY THE UTILIZATION OF THE ERTS PROGRAM'S RESOURCES. WE HAVE ALSO SUPPORTED THE EXTENSION OF THE SCOPE OF THIS SURVEY TO INCLUDE PART OF LIBERIA BORDERING ON SIERRA LEONE WHICH HAS BEEN IDENTIFIED BY THE MANO RIVER UNION AS AN AREA FOR POSSIBLE INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT. THE EMBASSY AND THE USAID MISSION IN LIBERIA HAVE BEEN CLOSELY INVOLVED IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ROKUPR RICE RESEARCH STATION BECAUSE OF OUR ASSISTANCE TO THE WEST AFRICAN RICE DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION, WITH WHICH ROKUPR IS LINKED. WE ARE TAKING A DIRECT INTEREST IN THE TRAINING OF COUNTERPART PERSONNEL AND THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE PHYSICAL PLANT AT ROKUPR. THE EMBASSY MET WITH THE FORMER ACTING RES REP AND THE ASSISTANT RES REP SEVERAL TIMES TO DISCUSS THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE BUNUMBU TEACHERS TRAINING COLLEGE. FINALLY THE EMBASSY HAS PROVIDED CRITICAL COMMENTS ON A PROPOSED UNDP LOWCOST HOUSING SCHEME, POINTING OUT IN PARTICULAR THE HIGH COSTS OF THE PROPOSED UNITS IN COMPARISON TO THE WAGES OF WORKING CLASS SIERRA LEONEANS.

(F) PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

11. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION HAS MOVED ALONG VERY SLOWLY, IN THE CASE OF THE ROKUPR RICE RESEARCH STATION, FOR EXAMPLE, EXPERT RECRUITMENT HAS BEEN HINDERED BY ROKUPR'S ISOLATED LOCATION LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AND THE CONSEQUENT LACK OF AMENITIES AND OF SUITABLE SCHOOL OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE CHILDREN OF RESEARCHERS. ONE AMERICAN ENTOMOLOGIST LEFT ROKUPR AFTER SEVERAL MONTHS OF FRUSTRATION AT THESE PROBLEMS AND AT THE LACK OF SUCH PROMISED SUPPORT AS EQUIPMENT AND RESEARCH ASSISTANT. POLICY CONFLICTS BETWEEN THE GOSL AND THE FORMER PROJECT MANAGER LED IN 1974 TO THE LATTER'S RESIGNATION. THE SITUATION HAS NOW IMPROVED SOMEWHAT BUT THE GOSL IS STILL HAVING A DIFFICULT TIME COMING UP WITH QUALIFIED CANDIDATES FOR RESEARCH ASSISTANT POSITIONS.

12. THE IDA INTEGRATED AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT IN THE EASTERN PROVINCE HAS BEEN A SUCCESSFUL PROJECT THAT HAS MET MOST OF ITS GOALS IN INCREASING RICE, COCOA AND OIL PALM ACREAGE, IN INTRODUCING A CREDIT MECHANISM AND IN OPERATING

A FARMER TRAINING AND EXTENSION PROGRAM. IRONICALLY, HOWEVER, MUCH OF THE SUCCESS OF THE PROGRAM APPEARS TO DERIVE FROM ITS AUTONOMY. IN SOME RESPECTS IT APPEARS TO BE ACTING AS A SHADOW MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE WITHIN THE PROJECT AREA, PROVIDING OVER A WIDE TERRITORY MANY OF THE SERVICES ONE MIGHT EXPECT TO BE PROVIDED BY THE MINISTRY. THE EXTENT OF IDA'S AUTONOMY GIVES RISE TO QUESTIONS AS TO WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THE PROJECT AFTER THE DEPARTURE OF THE EXPATRIATE STAFF AND WHEN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE WILL HAVE TO TAKE OVER CREDIT, TRAINING AND EXTENSION RESPONSIBILITIES.

(G) PROJECT EVALUATION

13. THE EMBASSY DOES NOT HAVE A COPY OF THE RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE'S ANNUAL REPORT. THE TRI-PARTITE REVIEW SYSTEM HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED AND HAS PROVED USEFUL TO EVALUATING THE PROGRESS OF LARGE PROJECTS. THE EMBASSY BELIEVES HOWEVER THAT CONSIDERABLE IMPROVEMENT CAN BE MADE IN MORE ACTIVELY INVOLVING THE GOSL IN THE EVALUATION PROCESS. THE APPROPRIATE INSTITUTIONS EXIST. IT IS ONLY A QUESTION OF ENSURING THAT THEY ARE ACTIVELY USED.

(H) WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT

14. DURING THE ABSENCE OF THE PERMANENT RESREP, A HIGHLY COMPETENT AND EFFICIENT WOMAN OCCUPIED THE POSITION OF ACTING ACT RESREP. WITH THE EXCEPTION OF HER, ONLY ABOUT 4 PERCENT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OF UNDP EXPERTS HAVE BEEN WOMEN. FOR THE MOST PART THE UNDP PROGRAMS HAVE VERY LITTLE IDENTIFIABLE IMPACT ON WOMEN. HOWEVER, THE IDA AGRICULTURE PROJECT HAS HAD SOME SUCCESS IN RUNNING MCH TRAINING COURSES FOR WOMEN TO COMPLEMENT THEIR FARMER TRAINING COURSES. PERHAPS MORE INTERESTINGLY, A SMALL BUT SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF THE FARMERS WHO HAVE BEEN INDIVIDUALLY PROVIDED CREDIT AND FARMER TRAINING HAVE BEEN WOMEN. PRELIMINARY EVIDENCE INDICATES THAT THESE WOMEN FARMERS HAVE IN MANY CASES RETAINED CONTROL OVER THE FRUITS OF THEIR LABOR AND HAVE, BY VIRTUE OF THEIR ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND THEIR RECOGNITION BY IDA, GAINED AN INCREASED MEASURE OF STATUS IN THEIR COMMUNITIES.

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## Message Attributes

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**Draft Date:** 18 APR 1975  
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